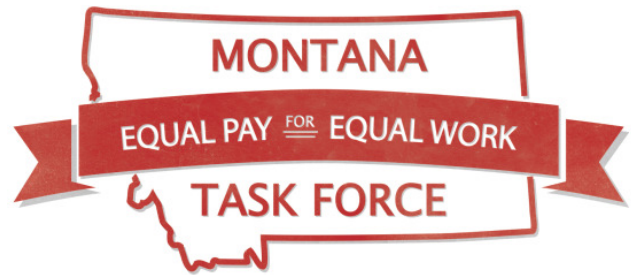


For Immediate Release

September 27, 2013

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Governor's Equal Pay for Equal Work Task Force holds inaugural meeting in Bozeman

Bozeman – The Montana Equal Pay for Equal Work Task Force convened at Montana State University on Friday, September 27, to answer Governor Steve Bullock's call to address the wage gap in Montana.

"Here in Montana, women are earning only 67 percent of what men earn, putting Montana at 39th place for pay equity in the nation," said Bullock, addressing the Task Force. "I'd match the Montana work ethic up against any other state in the nation, and 39th place for pay equity is unacceptable."

Co-Chaired by Pam Bucy, Commissioner of Labor and Industry, and Sheila Hogan, Director of the Department of Administration, the Equal Pay for Equal Work Task Force includes ten community members representing the business, labor, tribal, and education sectors from all over Montana.

"The Equal Pay for Equal Work Task Force provides an incredible opportunity to face this tough issue head on," said Task Force member and MSU President Waded Cruzado. "I am honored to lend my experience in leadership and higher education to this effort, and I am thrilled to host the first Task Force meeting right here at MSU."

At their first meeting, the Task Force reviewed economic research on the wage gap and established a work plan and subcommittees to develop a pay equity self-audit for public and private employers, promote education and training opportunities for Montana women, and gather public input for policy recommendations that will help to close Montana's wage gap.

The Task Force will hold meetings quarterly in several Montana communities and continue to engage diverse voices from every corner of the state.

"I'm looking forward to hearing the insight of these Task Force Members," said Hogan. "Through their leadership, I know that Montana can set national standards for public-private policy partnerships on closing the wage gap."

"Governor Bullock has set forth ambitious goals for this Task Force and appointed a dynamic group of people who will work hard to close Montana's wage gap," said Bucy. "I am confident that the leaders that he has appointed will bring invaluable experience and expertise to our work on behalf of Montana working families."

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